



**VG News: Restaurants Now Integrated into Virginia.org Website!**

We are excited to announce that we are moving towards making the VG application process entirely web-based using the *Virginia.org* Administration Tool. Restaurants are the first category to transition to the new online system; the other categories will be added over the next few months. Not only will this enable us to process applications more quickly, but it will also integrate members' profiles with their Virginia is for Lovers (*Virginia.org*) profiles. You can see an example [here](#) (click on the VGn logo to open the profile). Additionally, members will have the ability to update their "green" activities at any time through the *Virginia.org* Administration Tool. Starting immediately, restaurants that want to apply for VG should follow these [instructions](#).

**Spotlight: Reducing Stormwater Impacts**

As stormwater flows over land, it picks up heavy metals, bacteria, pesticides, suspended solids, nutrients, and floating materials. EPA estimates that in the US, stormwater runoff from residential, commercial, and industrial areas is responsible for 21% of impaired lakes and 45% of impaired estuaries. In the Mid-Atlantic region alone, stormwater is responsible for over 4,000 miles of impaired streams. Stormwater also affects drinking waterways, water supplies, beaches and properties. In parts of Virginia that have porous limestone geology, called Karst, pollution can filter down through the soil and rock into the aquifers that provide much of our groundwater supply.

What can VG members do to help minimize stormwater impacts? Some commonly recommended best management practices (BMPs) for commercial activities include practicing good hazardous materials storage practices, installing rain gardens, rain barrels and green roofs, promptly cleaning up vehicle leaks, regularly sweeping (not rinsing) parking lots and picking up litter. For example, the [Blue Mountain Brewery](#) in Afton has installed a rain barrel (*pictured at right*). More information on stormwater BMPs is available by following this [link](#). For a brief overview of stormwater impacts, click [here](#). (Sources: USEPA Region 3, Virginia Tech and Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation)



*Want to see your facility in the Gazette? Next month's Spotlight column will explore new opportunities for Virginians to purchase "green power." If your facility has a green power success story to share, please respond by the end of May to [viriniagreen@deq.virginia.org](mailto:viriniagreen@deq.virginia.org).*

**Member Highlights**

**Great Wolf Celebration:** On April 16<sup>th</sup>, Virginia Green participant Great Wolf Lodge in Williamsburg celebrated its designation as a "[Green Seal-certified](#)" lodging facility. Actually, the Green Seal-Silver designation has now been achieved by all 12 Great Wolf lodging facilities around the country – and those facilities all held similar celebrations on the same day. Virginia Green's Tom Griffin attended the ceremony and congratulated them on their achievement! For more information on Project Green Wolf, click [here](#).



**Lynchburg Wingate Goes "Green" for Earth Day:** To celebrate Earth Day, the Wingate by Wyndham in Lynchburg, a new Virginia Green member, literally turned itself "green" for a week by shining seven green spotlights on the front of building, which is located atop Candler's Mountain. For more information, on Wingate Green, click [here](#).

**Green Drinks for the Chesapeake Misses World Record!:** On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Earth Day, 16 chapters of the [Green Drinks](#) network held events in honor of the Chesapeake Bay. Nine were in Virginia and were collectively registered as a Virginia Green Event! 1,200 participants attended, shared information, and toasted the Chesapeake Bay! Next year is the 40 anniversary of Earth Day, and Green Drinks is determined to break the Green Drinks world record of 1,800 participants!

Thanks to everyone for the positive response to our first edition in April. We have made some initial changes for this issue and will be striving for "continual improvement," so please keep your comments and content suggestions coming in to [viriniagreen@deq.virginia.org](mailto:viriniagreen@deq.virginia.org)!

**Important Virginia Green Websites:**

[www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen](http://www.deq.virginia.gov/p2/viriniagreen): The Department of Environmental Quality's site which currently includes applications and member profiles.  
[www.virginia.org/green](http://www.virginia.org/green): The Virginia is for Lovers Virginia Green page, which includes trip ideas, upcoming events and other green travel information for visitors.

Virginia Green is a voluntary self-certification program for the Commonwealth's hospitality and tourism industry intended to reduce the industry's environmental footprint while promoting its economic sustainability. It operates as a partnership between the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Hospitality and Travel Association. To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#), or call 804-698-4172.